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REPENTANCE TOWER

AND ITS TRADITION.

BY
GEORGE NEILSON,
Author of "Trial by Combat," &c.

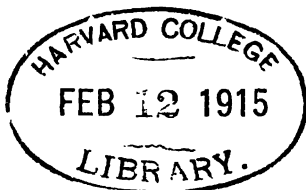


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P R E F A C E.

THE fascination which, from childhood, Repentance Tower, in Annandale, has ever had for myself, is my reason for believing that my solution of its historical problem may interest others. I have therefore reprinted 200 copies—150 for sale—of a paper in the *Proceedings of the Glasgow Archæological Society* (New Series, vol. ii.), making two or three minor verbal changes, and adding three photographic plates. For the first and third of these, I have to thank my friend Mr. Macgregor Chalmers.

G. N.

34 GRANBY TERRACE,

GLASGOW, *April, 1895.*

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REPENTANCE TOWER AND ITS TRADITION.

*Read at a Meeting of the Glasgow Archaeological Society held on
7th September, 1893.*

I.—THE TRADITION.

“ BRIGHT shone the moon on Hoddom's wal',
Bright on Repentance Tower ;
Mirk was the lord of Hoddom's saul,
That chief sae sad and sour :
He sat him on Repentance hicht
And glower'd upon the sea,
And sair and heavily he sicht,
But nae drap eased his bree.

The nicht is fair, and calm the air,
Nae blasts disturb the tree,
Bith man and beast now tak' their rest,
And a's at peace but me :
Can wealth and power in princely bo'wer,
Can beauty's rolling e'e,
Can friendship dear, wi' kindly tear,
Bring back my peace to me ?
Na ! lang, lang maun the mourner pine,
And meikle penance dree ;
Wha has a heavy heart like mine
Ere licht that heart can be.”¹

Repentance or Trailtrow Hill, in Annandale, with its old tower visible from long distances in almost every direction, is a place with unique claims upon the attention of Scotsmen. It commands a view of exceptional extent, interest, variety, and beauty; it is associated with stirring incident in border war; it

¹ From Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe's ballad, “The Lord Herries: his Complaint,” published in Sir Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. One or two other stanzas quoted hereafter are also from this ballad.

has a striking legend touching its origin and its name; and its romantic story has lent inspiration to at least three poets, whose verse has thus thrown a vivid, if fanciful, light upon the past. Without the aid of the imaginative faculty to which we owe the ballads of Kirkpatrick Sharpe, of the lady known to literature as Jeanie Morrison, and of Dr. James Milligan,¹ it may be possible to re-light the torch of Repentance Tower with facts, and by their illuminating power to penetrate its yet unmastered mystery.

Repentance Hill may conceivably be that identical little hill which, according to 12th century tradition, rose up out of "the plain² which is called Hoddom," when St. Mungo first preached the gospel in Annandale, in the year 573. Its name even might be deduced from the great spiritual awakening which followed that memorable visit of the Strathclyde saint, at whose bidding the devils fled out of the district, never to return! This, however, would be a mere philological figment, and is not to be entertained. The oldest name by which we can trace the hill through the mist of far-off years is Trevertrold,³ a word the first syllable of which denotes a hillside. Trailtrow is the modern form of that name, one of the oldest in the south of Scotland. The scope of my paper does not embrace the ecclesiastical history of this place in its various phases as a religious settlement⁴ attributable to St. Mungo, a chapel, hospital, and preceptory,⁵ and a normal parochial charge before the Reformation, until its ultimate passage out of separate ecclesiastical existence when Trailtrow parish was merged in Cummertrees.⁶

Of Hoddom, in its secular aspects, a few words fall to be said. The first Steward of Annandale (which was, down to the present century, known as a

¹ Kirkpatrick Sharpe's ballad has been already partly quoted. That of "Jeanie Morrison" was published in her "Ane Booke of Ballades." That of the late Dr. Milligan originally appeared in the *Annandale Observer*, and was subsequently published in his "Wimpleburn, or Village Sketches."

² *In planicie campi vocabulo Holdelm.* St. Ninian and St. Kentigern (Historians of Scotland), p. 217.

³ *Glasgow Chartulary (Registrum Episcopatus Glasguensis)*, p. 4.

⁴ *Glasgow Chart.*, 4.

⁵ Chalmers' *Caledonia*, iii. 153-4, 190-1.

⁶ *Acts of Parliament Scotland*, iv. 441.

Stewartry, just as Kirkcudbright is to this day) was Udard of Hoddom,¹ a member of a family which presumably took its name from the place. In the 12th and 13th centuries there may have been a hall or residence of some kind there, but no real evidence has been adduced for the existence of a castle. The alleged castle of the Bruces, at Hallguards,² on the east bank of the river, said³ to have been "demolished some centuries ago, in compliance with a border treaty," is as devoid of documentary voucher as the alleged treaty for its demolition.⁴

Very little information is available about Hoddom until the 16th century. In the 15th century it had become the property of the barons Herries of Terregles.⁵ Still there is no proof of a castle. None emerges until the middle of the 16th century, and when Hoddom Castle appears in the records, it is speedily followed by Repentance Tower.

No romance has woven itself round the history of Hoddom Castle. Repentance, on the contrary, has a tradition which has given it renown as a veritable ballad-maker's joy. That tradition has divers versions. One form of the story is that Hoddom Castle was built out of the stones of Trailtrow Chapel, and that the baron, who built it, erected the tower also, inscribing above its lintel the word "Repentance," because his sacrilegious act lay heavy on his soul.⁶ But another version, much more striking and poetical in character, has taken deeper root in popular mind and memory. Its oldest written form is in Pocock's "Tours,"⁷ where it is stated that the tower was built for a beacon by a Lord Herries, who was an enemy of Mary Queen of Scots, but afterwards turned papist and repented of his deeds. A tourist more renowned than Pocock, the observant Pennant, took note of the story. According to his account,⁸ the tower was built by Lord Herries as an atonement for

¹ Bain's *Calendar*, i. 197, 605, 606, 607; *Glasgow Chart.*, p. 64.

² Chalmers' *Caledonia*, iii. 79; *New Statistical Account* (Hoddam Parish).

³ *New Statistical Account*, Dumfriesshire (Cummertrees Parish), p. 292.

⁴ It is noteworthy that in the introduction to Kirkpatrick Sharpe's ballad in the *Border Minstrelsy*, no mention is made of the alleged earlier castle.

⁵ *Reg. Mag. Sig.*, ii. 1654, 2294, 2526.

⁶ *New Statistical Account* (Cummertrees Parish); Chalmers' *Caledonia*, iii. 191.

⁷ Pocock's *Tours in Scotland* (Scottish History Society), p. 34.

⁸ Pennant's *Tour in Scotland*, i. 105-6.

putting to death some prisoners whom he had taken under promise of quarter. The variant most widely current, however, narrates that one of the barons Herries, said to have been known as John the Reif, had made a raid into England. Returning across the Solway, he was overtaken by a storm, and to lighten the boat's load, he cut the throats of several of his prisoners and threw them into the sea. Kirkpatrick Sharpe made this version the basis of his ballad, which describes the luckless persons thus sacrificed as twelve in number, and makes the remorseful baron soliloquise as follows :—

Alas ! twelve precious lives were spilt,
My worthless spark to save ;
Bet had I fallen withouten guilt,
Frae cradle to the grave.

Repentance signal of my bale,
Built of the lasting stane ;
Ye lang shall tell the bluidy tale,
When I am deid and gane.

How Hoddum's lord ye lang sall tell,
By conscience stricken sair,
In life sustained the pains of hell,
And perished in despair.

To examine this weird story, to bring history to bear upon legend, to ascertain, if possible, the builder of Repentance Tower and why he built it, is the object here.

Historical scholars know how greatly tradition, even when well-vouched and genuine, varies in value. They know that it is never wholly reliable although it rarely lacks some reality. They know that frequently it possesses the characteristic of fiction founded on fact, preserving in a distorted and erroneous form an actual historical memory. Can we disentangle the fact from mythical overgrowth in these various editions of the tale of Repentance Tower? Or are the two now so grown together as to be inseparable? They say that of old the fairies were wont to haunt the tree-clad height of Woodcockair, which stands beside Repentance in a bend of the Annan water. Have the fairies with their spells travestied all truth out of the story of this lonesome tower? Or have they only embellished with a playful touch of fancy what at bottom may still be recognised and read as an "ower true tale?"

Divested of superfluous detail, tradition lays the foundations of Repentance Tower in remorse—remorse for a sacrifice of human life in some episode of border war or foray. Let us now look at the Tower. Let us guess its age. Let us search for a baron Herries of that time. Then let us see if records furnish any clue enabling us to identify in him the remorseful founder, and thus to track tradition to its lair.

II.—THE TOWER.

On Trailtrow Hill, at a height of 350 feet above sea level, stands in an old burying-ground a small bare tower, 23 feet 9 inches by 21 feet 6 inches externally, being thus almost square in plan. Its walls are 5 feet 6 inches thick, with loopholes or small shot-holes on all sides. The interior is not planned for residence, like an ordinary border tower, there being no fire-places. The entrance doorway is on the first floor, and has been defended by a double door. There is a curious angle cupboard in one corner. The staircase was probably of wood. The tower has a stone roof, through the midst of which rises a beacon chimney or turret. It thus contains internal evidence of its purpose and history. It is a watch or signal tower.¹

The most curious feature of the building is an inscription over the entrance. The doorway stands considerably above the ground level. Access is now gained to it by a short external stair, which, however, is a modern addition.² The lintel of the doorway has carved upon it, in raised lettering,³ the word **REpentence**, with the figure of a bird at the one end and a scroll at the other. The bird and scroll have been, by some writers, taken for a dove and a serpent. But these emblems of remorse and grace, as they have been styled,⁴

¹ I am indebted for the measurements and for the architectural characterisations given *supra*, to Messrs. MacGibbon and Ross's *Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland*, ii. 60, 61.

² Preface to Kirkpatrick Sharpe's ballad *ut supra*, describes the builder as "carving over the door, which is about half-way up the building and had formerly no stair to it, the figures of a dove and a serpent, emblems of remorse and grace, and the motto '*Repentance*.'"

³ The lettering curiously mixes two Roman capitals (R and P) with the late Gothic character of the remainder.

⁴ The original authority for so styling them is Pennant, *Tour in Scotland*, i. 105.

are extremely problematical. Indeed, it is my opinion that the scroll is not a serpent, although the bird may conceivably have been intended for a dove.

It is very probable that some of the present architectural features of the tower are due to repair or restoration subsequent, possibly considerably subsequent, to the original erection. There are no date-determining details in the work. It is safe to say, however, that none of the characteristics would warrant the inference of an origin much before the middle of the 16th century—a date which must be borne in mind in any enquiry into the builder's identity.

III.—THE WOOING OF AGNES OF HERRIES.

In searching for the founder of Repentance, we find a Sir John Herries in the 14th century and another in the 15th; but there is no proof that the estate of Hoddom belonged to the family of Herries of Terregles until after their day. Whether it did so or not, however, is not material. The main fact is, that there is no mention of a castle of Hoddom, or of the Tower of Repentance, in either the 14th or 15th centuries.

It is very peculiar that the castle of Hoddom on its present site (and there is no satisfactory ground for thinking that it ever had any other) is not in the parish of Hoddom. It is in the old parish of Trailltrow, now part of Cummertrees. There is every reason to believe that anciently the lands of Hoddom, like Hoddom Parish, were bounded by the Annan water, and lay wholly on its northern and eastern bank. Not until after the middle of the 16th century does the estate appear to have crossed the river, and not until then is there, in the records known to me, any allusion to the existence of any castle of Hoddom.¹

William, Lord of Herries, proprietor of Hoddom, died about 1543, leaving three daughters, Agnes, Catherine, and Janet. Their guardianship and the right to nominate husbands for them, technically called their "marriage," vested in the Crown, and thus fell to be exercised by the family of the Earl of Arran,² Regent of Scotland. Agnes was the most desirable match; as the

¹ The preface to Kirkpatrick Sharpe's ballad, in the *Border Minstrelsy*, describes that castle as "an ancient structure said to have been built betwixt the years 1437 and 1484." I think this date is an error.

² *Reg. Mag. Sig.*, iii. 405, 562, 581; Bain's *Hamilton Papers* (Scottish Record publications), ii. 155. *Hist. MSS. Commission*, 11th Report, app. part vi., 220 l.

eldest of the three heiresses portioners, the peerage title went to her, although the lands fell to be equally divided. Each of the three girls obtained one-third share of Hoddum.

Agnes of Herries, the eldest sister, a peeress in her own right, was a great matrimonial prize in an age which had as keen an eye as the present for the matrimonial advantages of "tocher" and title. Agnes had two prominent suitors—both young men of rank, power, and ambition. One of them was the Earl of Arran's son, Lord John Hamilton. The other was John Maxwell, second son of Robert, the fifth Lord Maxwell. When the long story of the strange wooing of Agnes of Herries is told, we shall, perhaps, see our way into the heart of the mystery of Repentance Tower.

The prospects of the two wooers might appear to us very unequal. The "marriage" of the young lady belonged to the Crown, and the Regent, exercising the Crown right, had chosen for her husband his own son. What hope was there for the second son of a Dumfriesshire lord against such a rival? Young John Maxwell, however, was a force not to be lightly reckoned with. His father had been taken prisoner at Solway Moss, and Henry VIII. had striven hard by fair means and foul to get him brought over to the English view of the great question of the day—the question, namely, of the marriage of Mary, the infant queen of Scotland. By the cruel pressure of Henry, Lord Maxwell was induced to hand over Carlaverock to English troops in 1545, but they were only able to hold it for a few weeks. That war-worn fortress could ill endure an English garrison; soon the Regent rescued it from the invader, and the banner of Scotland was planted on its battlements again.¹ Young Maxwell all through this trying time had proved himself an astute diplomatist, a wary soldier, and a man of determined will. Even his own father despaired² of the attempt to persuade him to surrender Lochmaben Castle to the Englishmen. The state papers of the period show that the officers of Henry VIII. recognised in this young Scotsman an individuality of no small capacity, courage, and force.³

The great public question entered upon an acute phase when Scotland

¹ *Diurnal of Occurrents*, 41; Tytler, iii. 39; M'Dowall's *History of Dumfries*, 2nd ed. 189.

² *State Papers of Henry VIII.* (Record Publication), 1534-46, v. p. 535.

³ *Ib.* 535, 539, 543.

positively refused to betroth her child-queen to the son of the bluff and overbearing English monarch. Moreover, mighty problems of faith and government were involved in the politics of the time. A large party in Scotland was attached to the English interest, and the country was divided against itself. King Henry died, but his policy lived on, so that war was the outcome. In 1547 Pinkie was lost—a black Saturday for our poor faction-riven land. Whilst fate was thus adverse in the eastern counties, the luck of Scotland was no better in the south. The old fighting steeple of Annan, after a gallant and strenuous defence was forced to haul down its “pensell of defyaunce” at last, was captured and blown up, but covered itself with glory before it fell.¹ The English made themselves masters of the whole shire, and the inhabitants became, to use the language of the time, “assured Scots”—they swore to faithful service of the English king and gave hostages in security of their oath. Amongst these assured Scots was John, Master of Maxwell, with over 1,000 followers.² Indeed, Holinshed³ marks him as pre-eminent, saying that pledges were delivered, “but especiallie for John Maxwell.” He, like the others, gave hostages; delivered to the English some of his younger relatives who were liable to answer with their heads for the due observance of his engagement. Should he waver from his word, should he forget to be a vassal of England, should nature re-awaken in him the patriot-Scot, he might reckon that it would go hard with his young kinsmen who had gone to Carlisle as his pledges, the securities for his oath.

The assured Scots and the Englishmen were ill-assorted allies. There was no trust between them. Various raids were made into Scotland, and especially into Galloway. The Scots bore the red cross of St. George⁴ as the livery of their new master, a symbol of sad suggestiveness. It mattered not that a

¹ *Lesley De Origine moribus et rebus gestis Scotorum* (ed 1675) 465; Holinshed *sub anno*, 1547 (Arbroath reprint), ii., p. 241; Patrick Anderson's *History* (MS. Advocates' Library), ii. p. 105; *Letter of the Earl of Lennox and Lord Wharton*, dated 16th September, 1547. (*Record Office State Papers, Edward VI., 1547.*, V. 1) printed in *Dumfries Standard*, “Auld Lang Syne” column, No. cix.

² Nicolson & Burn's *History and Antiquities of Westmoreland and Cumberland* (1777), p. lv. Bruce Armstrong's *Liddesdale* i. appx. p. lxxiii.

³ Holinshed, *Scottish Chronicle* (Arbroath reprint), ii. 244.

⁴ Tytler, iii. 65. Pitscottie (1814) 430.

Scottish nobleman, the Earl of Lennox, was their leader; it mattered not that their submission was the result of force and fear—the spectacle was not inspiring, it recalled the worst days of Scottish history when the wretched Baliol faction played its selfish game for power, when Dumfriesshire was bartered away from the Scottish crown. The red cross of St. George betokened that St. Andrew was momentarily forsaken. But not forgotten: there were a thousand signs that the heart of Nithsdale and Annandale was sound, that their Scottish blood was true. Lennox and Wharton, with your piebald army, half English and half Scotch, be on your guard! Watch your Scotch contingent well! Ye know not how soon they may tear off their borrowed badges of St. George, unsweat their extorted oaths, and write themselves with their long spear points in bloody lettering, Scotsmen again.

IV.—JOHN, MASTER OF MAXWELL.

In the end of February, 1548, a great expedition was arranged by Thomas, Lord Wharton, who was the English warden of the West March. The Earl of Lennox and he were to be met at Dumfries by the Master of Maxwell and all his men. One authority declares that this invasion was the project of the Master of Maxwell, who had a private end in view. If so, it was a peculiarly crooked turn in his tortuous wooing of Agnes of Herries.

“John, Master of Maxwell,” wrote one of his descendants, the Herries family annalist,¹ “brother to the Lord Maxwell, was the special man in this negotiation. He was, at this tyme in suite of the heretrix of Herries, whoe was kept in protection by the Governor, who had a mynd to marrie her to his owen son, Lord John. The Master of Maxwell, a young gentleman of great faime upon the Border, to work mischief to the Governor for crossing him in his suite, agitates the business, and brings it to that poynt that two thousand hors ar appoynted and conditioned to meet the Earl of Lennox and the Lord Whartoune, Livetenant for England, at Dumfries. Whereupon he delyvers to the Lord Whartoune fifteen young gentlemen pledges.”

Such was the position of affairs on 22nd February, 1548, when Wharton and Lennox arrived at Dumfries. But already a new intrigue was afoot, a new

¹ Herries *Memoirs* (Abbotsford Club) p. 22. The author is believed to have been John, the eighth Lord Herries.

move of policy subtly schemed to checkmate the English game. The night before, in the chapel of Keir in Upper Nithsdale, the young Master of Maxwell had met by appointment with his uncle,¹ the laird of Drumlanrig, who, according to a Scottish authority,² "delt verie earnestlie with the Mr. of Maxwell to assist him against the English, and promised to get him the "Heretrix of Terrigles for his reward." Drumlanrig had the sanction of the Regent Arran for this proposal. "The Governor," according to another writer,³ "fynding how the game lay, sent to the Master of Maxwell and offred the "young lady to him if he will cross again the invasion."

It was a crucial moment. What was young Maxwell to do? His word, indeed, was pledged—most deeply pledged to England: the lives of fifteen hostages, mostly his own kinsmen, hung on his good faith. But to be true to the lieutenant of the English king, he must be false to his country. It was a stern alternative. Patriotism claimed him; reminded him of the proverb that ill oaths are best kept by being broken; demanded that he should go back upon his word; urged upon him a public duty; stirred anew the proud traditions of a family that never, till now, had tampered with treason to the Scottish crown, that never had been hand in hand with Englishmen before; recalled to his wavering heart the memory of his grandfather who, with four brothers, fell on Flodden field; then held out to him the laurel of a nation's gratitude; last of all, proffering a dear and precious gift in the hand of the much wished for, richly dowried bride. Love, interest, and ambition swayed him the one way. His word of honour, and the thought of his hostages, swayed him the other. Issues of vast moment, personal and national, swung in the balance, but at last patriotism, self-interest, and love gained the day. "Being but a young man," says one of our annalists,⁴ "the "hope of so great a reward maid him to yeeld and to satisfie his uncle's "desyre." He promised, in the dusk at Keir chapel, that he would "cross again" the invasion; that he would be false to England and his oath; that

¹ James Douglas. The Master of Maxwell's mother was his sister. *Book of Carlevarock*, i. 207.

² Patrick Anderson's *History* (MS. Advocate's Library, Edinburgh), ii. fo. 113.

³ Herries *Memoirs*, p. 22-3.

⁴ Patrick Anderson's *MS. Hist.*, ii. 110.

his poor young hostages must just take their chance ; that his followers would suddenly and openly revolt ; and that he himself would lead the onslaught on those Englishmen, who, relying on his honour and his bond, were even then marching up Dumfriesshire as his allies.

It were long to tell of the details of 23rd February, 1548, and of the "great treason," as Wharton not unjustly called it, which Maxwell wrought that day. The Englishmen journeyed northward side by side with the Scottish contingent, till they reached Durisdeer. The enemy, the laird of Drumlanrig and his forces, were in view, and the combined battalion of Englishmen and Scots ranged itself in fighting array. But, at the very beginning, Wharton and Lennox were sharply taught the lesson of Ancrum Moor over again—nevermore to trust in the assured Scot. Maxwell and his band of Nithsdale and Annandale spearmen watched their opportunity, a black flag was hoisted as the signal, and in a moment the allies of Wharton became the allies of the enemy. "The assured Scots,¹ thinking the interpryse to be sure anuigh "conveyed for there contrived purpose, oppenlie upon the field neere to "Dusdere, hoysing up a blak pensill upon a speares point for a token, revolted "whollie and joined them selves to the laird of Drumlanrig and other there "countriemen, and thrust in betuix the English horsemen and footemen, to "the great perrill of distressing the one as well as the other." This demoralised the English force: it "pat thame abak," pithily says a contemporary diarist.² Yet the result was not by any means a decisive defeat ; the English rallied, put the Scots to flight, and took some prisoners. "The Maister of "Maxwell³ eschaped in great danger of his lyfe, for he hade sundrie speares "brocken on him in the chease as he fled away." The progress of the expedition, however, was effectually stayed. Wharton and Lennox went back to Carlisle faster than they came. Maxwell's sudden change of front had emphatically "crossed again" the invasion.

Wharton, smarting under this treacherous surprise, did not forget that

¹ Patrick Anderson's *Hist.*, ii. fo. 117 ; Holinshed, ii. 425.

² *Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 46. "The Inglismen passand to burne Drumlanrik, the "thevis tuke pairt with the Scottis and pat thame abake, and sua thai pairtis come to the "auld style agane."

³ Patrick Anderson's *Hist.*, ii. fo. 117 ; Holinshed, ii. 245.

Maxwell had forfeited his pledge. The death of the hostage was the due penalty of broken faith—a penalty which Wharton bitterly exacted. The number of the hostages whom he executed, is not certain, as accounts differ,¹ but one author, not likely to exaggerate, declares that out of the fifteen hostages fourteen were hanged.² The bridegroom of the Heretrix of Herries was paying dearly for his bride. He had bought her with a price of blood—his kinsmen's lives.

A few days or weeks later Maxwell sent to Wharton a challenge to fight in single combat, to which the latter returned an instant and passionate reply.³ "John Maxwell," he bursts out in red-hot words, "I have receyved your letter. "Ye wrytt falslye and call me a tyraunt lord, which is not trewlye nor advisedlie : "but if you can fynd any man of honour in that realme—the Governour who "hath gevin you reward for brekin your faithe, or others—that woll wryt so "to me in your quarrell, I shall answer hym as to the laws of armes, the "honour of this realme, and my blood requyreth. But to answer *you* who is "perjured, and hath broken your faith whereby you consentyd the deathe of "your pledges delyvered by you, I think your treason is such and so well "known that the same nedythe no more proffe. But with you I woll thus "end : that good it is ye axe God mercye and pardon of the Kinges Majeste, "our Sovereign Lord, for that abominable treason done by you to your "dishonour⁴ whos blood (if you do not) have smarted and woll smarte and "you the chief occasion." Thus proudly Wharton, though willing to meet any antagonist of untarnished honour, declined Maxwell's challenge, heaping insult after insult on him as a false and perjured man, with whom by law of arms no gentleman was bound to fight.

¹ Holinshed, ii. 246; Patrick Anderson's *History*, ii. fo. 118; Tytler, iii. 65, 66.

² *Herries Memoirs*, p. 23. "He instantlie hanged fourteen of those pledges. Onlie one called George Herries of Terrawchtie was spaired, being too young."

³ *State Papers of Henry VIII.*, 1534-46, v. p. 559. This letter is undated, and the editor is disposed to refer it to the events of 1545 and 1546. I think the internal evidence is convincing that it was written in 1548.

⁴ In a letter by Lennox and Wharton, dated 25th February, 1548 (*Record Office State Papers, Scotland. Edward VI., 1548*) printed in *Dumfries Standard*, "Auld Lang Syne" column, No. cx., the Maxwells are denounced as having "traitorouslie shewed this thar falsheid to thar dishonor worldly for ever."

V.—JOHN LORD HERRIES.

It was true, as Wharton said, that Maxwell had received his reward. Agnes of Herries was given to him in marriage.¹ The Master of Maxwell became Sir John Maxwell of Terregles, and after a time obtained, in right of his wife, the full title of Lord Herries.² We have thus found a John Lord Herries, whose early history strangely tallies with that of the traditional builder of Repentance Tower. It becomes us now to consider whether other facts in his career make it possible or likely that he reared the beacon tower so associated with tragedy.

On account of their being within the forbidden degrees of blood relationship a Papal dispensation³ was necessary to confirm the union of the strangely wedded pair. A Crown charter, not long after the marriage, completed their right to one-third of the lands of Hoddum, of the £20-land of Hoddum.⁴ The other two-thirds belonged to the lady's sisters—Katherine and Janet—who made over their interests to Lord John Hamilton, formerly an aspirant for the hand of Maxwell's bride. Lord John sold his interest in the lands to his successful rival, so that in the year 1561 Sir John Maxwell of Terregles

¹ Another family account of the whole transaction appears in the Kirkconnell MS., *Early History of the Maxwells*, transcribed for and printed in the *Dumfries Standard* by three instalments, begun on 27th November, 1889. "It hapened that in anno 1547 the haill inhabitants of Annandale, Eskdaill, Ewsdalle, Wauchopdalle, Galloway beneath Cree, and Nithsdail to Drumlanrig, in absence of the Lords of Maxwell, being overcome be the oast of Ingland, was compelled to hold and be at the oppinione of the King of Ingland and hade delyvered for obedience the pledges to my Lord Quhartoune, Wardane for Ingland. The said Lord comeing forward to Duresdear with ane great oast minding to pernew furdur in Scotland the said Sir John Maxwell and Sir James Douglass of Drumlanrig who abaid still att the oppinione of Ingland, sett creully upon the Inglish army, and swa drave the Inglish Wardane and his army back again to Dumfreis and from thence home again to Carlyle, making the weter of Sullway the march and Esk as it was before. In recompence of the whilk good service the said Sir John Maxwell gott the heretrix of the Lordship of Herries to wife from James, Earl of Arran, then Governor of Scotland, and swa was the Lord of Teregells; altho it was dear to the pledges of Scotland who were all executted in Ingland for break of Scotland's promise."

² "In the year of God 1565 he was created Lord Herreis, be the said Queen Marie and King Henrie her spous," Kirkconnell MS., *supra*.

³ *Book of Carlawerock*, i. 501.

⁴ *Reg. Mag. Sig.*, iv. 405; Charter of 1st February, 1549-50.

was proprietor of most extensive lands¹ in Dumfriesshire and Galloway, amongst them being the Hoddom estate.

As already said, however, that did not include the property across the river, the lands on which Hoddom Castle and Repentance both stand. It must therefore be explained how these lands were acquired. When Maxwell's father, Lord Maxwell, died in 1546 he was succeeded by his son, Robert, who died in 1552, leaving two sons, Robert and John. The former infant lord lived only two years, and his brother, two years old, succeeded to the lordship in 1554—he being that Lord Maxwell destined to fall in the fierce clan battle of Maxwell against Johnstone at Dryfesands, Lockerbie, in 1593. In 1552, then, the Master of Maxwell became the guardian of his nephews. When the four-year old Robert died, in 1554, the uncle still acted as the guardian² of the successor, John. He filled the public rôle the Lord Maxwell himself would have played had he not been a child: as guardian he exercised all the authority belonging to his young ward—and this, be it remembered, in addition to the influence springing from his ownership of large estates of his own in his wife's right.³ This wide rôle he had for twenty years, a position of commanding importance in the public affairs of southern Scotland, affording ample scope for the talents of a highly able and ambitious man. He was long the Scottish warden of the West March. In all the offices and estates of Lord Maxwell he was in theory trustee, steward, or factor for his nephew; in reality, he wielded all the powers as if lord himself.

VI.—HODDOM CASTLE.

Amongst the offices held by the successive Lords Maxwell, our hero's father and brother, that of Bailie⁴ of the Preceptory of Trailtrow was one. Jurisdictions like that, the management of the temporalities of ecclesiastical bodies, furnished the nobility with many opportunities by which at the

¹ A letter of 16th April, 1548, printed in Bruce Armstrong's *Liddesdale*, i. Appx. p. lxxxv., says: "John Maxwell was well rewardyt with the doghter and heyr of the Lord Herryis, for "that jorney, which is countyt to be of as grete landes as the Lord Maxwell."

² *Book of Carlawerock*, i. 222, 223.

³ *Book of Carlawerock*, i. 497-8.

⁴ *Book of Carlawerock*, i. 175.

Reformation the Church lands fell naturally enough into their clutch. This was done usually by the instrumentality of a real documentary title, as appears to have been the case with the passage of the lands of Trailtrow from the Preceptory to the acting representative of its Bailie.¹

We are bound to presume that the powers and interests in Trailtrow, heritably vested in the Maxwell family, were exercised by Sir John on his ward's behalf. Indeed, the presumption is explicitly corroborated by a statement made many years later by the ward himself. The lord of Hoddum, in the exercise of these rights of his ward, had an eye to his own personal interests as well. He obtained a charter in his own favour, as an individual, to a considerable portion of the lands of Trailtrow, including the forty-shilling-lands of Hoddumstanes. A few years later we know by charter evidence that these lands had had a tower and fortalice built upon them.² That that fortalice was Hoddum Castle is manifest³ (1) because in a title-deed⁴ of the lands of Hoddumstanes it appears that the manor place of Hoddum stood on these lands; (2) because an old map (in which there is no Repentance Tower) shows the "Castell of Hoddumstanes" sitting where Hoddum Castle sits to-day;⁵ and (3) because Hoddum Castle is sometimes in legal and other

¹ It is interesting to remember the cognomen which tradition gave to the builder of Repentance. John the Reif, says legend, was his name. Sir John Maxwell was most probably Bailie of the Preceptory of Trailtrow; certainly he acted as steward on behalf of the Maxwells for their interests in Annandale and Trailtrow. John the Reif may be John the Reeve—there is good Scots authority for the warrant in spelling, and for Reif and Reeve meaning bailiff or steward. John the Reif might therefore denote John the land-steward—a by no means inconceivable description of the functions exercised by Sir John Maxwell.

² *Reg. Mag. Sig.*, iv. 2311.

³ Sir William Fraser who in his noble contribution to Maxwell history, the *Book of Carlaverock*, i. 568, states that "Lord Herries built the house of Hoddumstanes in Annandale," seems not to have noticed that this was the original name of Hoddum Castle.

⁴ *Returns*, Dumfries, No. 304, in 1680. "40 solidatis terrarum de Trailtrow vocatis Hoddumstanes, cum maneriei loco de Hoddum."

⁵ "Aglionby's Platt of the opposite borders of Scotland to the West Marches of England," [*temp. Queen Elizabeth*] a copy of which is given in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries*, London, vol. xxii. p. 161, with a communication by Sir Henry Ellis, dated May, 1827. I am indebted to Mr. George Graham, C.E., for the use of his copy of this most interesting map. There is a passage in Sir James Melvil of Halhill's *Memoirs* (Glasgow edition, 1751, p. 67) about his meeting at Newcastle with an Englishman sent to draw a map of the borders. Could this have been Aglionby?

writings¹ called the tower and fortalice of Hoddomstanes. I believe, therefore, that Hoddom Castle was built by John, Lord Herries,² between the years 1550 and 1560.

VII.—TRAILTROW BEACON.

Not until about 1562 have I found any mention of Repentance Tower. But the height on which it stands, and to which it has given the name of Repentance Hill, had from immemorial time been a beacon station. Topographically its position marked it out peculiarly for that purpose. Easily accessible, visible for many miles, east, west, south, and north, and with no height between it and the Solway, it was fitted in a unique degree to be the main connecting link in a chain of signal bonfires, which flashed up the Annan and the Nith the news of English foray. In a great border conference held at Lincluden in 1448, the beacon system was carefully considered, and the various signal stations fixed and ratified in accordance with ancient usage. "Item it is fundin statut and usit in tyme of werfar anentis bailis birning and keping for cuming of ane Inglis oist in Scotland, ther sal ane baill be brynt on Trailtrow hill."³ So began the Lincluden Border Ordinance, which

¹ *Reg. Mag. Sig.*, iv. 2311. "40 solidatas antiqui extentus earundem vocatas Hodomestanis cum turri et fortalicio ejusdem," *Reg. Mag.* vii. 295. Monipennie's *Description of Scotland*, 1612, reprinted in *Collectanea Scotica*, Glasgow, vol. i. pp. 137-8, "Hoddamistanis, next standeth the watch-tower of Repentance."

² That he was the builder is directly stated by several writers—Pennant's *Tour*, i. 105; Chalmers' *Caledonia*, iii. 191; Fraser's *Book of Carlaverock*, i. 568.

³ *Acts, Parl. Scot.*, i. 716—The full text of the passage is as follows:—"Item it is fundin statut and usit in tyme of werfar anentis bailis birning and keping for cuming of ane Inglis oist in Scotland, ther sal ane baill be brynt on Trailtrow hill; and ane uther on the Panch-nat hill; ane on the Bailze hill, abone the Holmendis; ane on the Coldanis, abone Castelmylk; ane on Qubitwewin, in Drivisdail; ane on the Burane Skentoun, in Apilgarth parochin; ane on the Browane hill; and ane on the Bleise, in the tenement of Wamfray; ane on the Kyndilknok, in the tenement of Johnestoun; ane on the Gallowhill, in Moffet parochin; and syne in Nyddisdail, ane on the Wardlaw; ane on Rahothtoun; ane on Barlouch; ane on the Pantua hill; ane on the Malow hill; ane on Corswintoun; ane on Crwfell; ane on the fell abone the Dowlwerk; and ane on the Watchfell. And to ger ther balis be kept and maid the Shiref of Nyddisdail and the steward of Ananderdail, and the steward of Kirkcudbright, in Gallowai, salbe dettouris, and quhasa kepis nocht the balis ordinance and statut beand maid in tym of werfar sal pay for ilk default a merk.

"Item quhatever be be, and ane oist of Inglismen cum in the cuntre the balis beand

contained regulations relative to the maintenance of bales or bonfire signals, on a well-chosen series of heights, against the coming of an English host. One of these lines of warning ran up Annandale, the other up Nithsdale. Repentance Hill, then called Trailtrow Hill, was geographically common to both. I have seen Repentance from the Wardlawhill in Carlaverock, from

"brynt that followis nocht on the oist on hors or on fut ever quhill the Inglismen be passit of Scotland, and at thai have sufficient witnessing thair of all thair gudis salbe escheit and ther bodyis at the wardanis will bot gif thai have lauchfull excuse for thaim."

These various beacon stations are, with two or three exceptions, easily identified. (1) Trailtrow is 350 feet above sea level. (2) Panchnat, a copyist's mistake for Panthuat, now Pantath (400 feet), on the confines of Mouswald and Ruthwell. (3) The "Bailze hill abone the Holmendis" is, I think, that called the Bailie hill (797 feet) in Crawford's Map of Dumfriesshire, in Dalton Parish near the ruins of Holmains Tower. (4) Coldanis is Cowdens (603 feet) in St. Mungo Parish. (5) Qubitwewin is Whitwollin (733 feet), a green conical hill near Lockerbie. (6) Burane Skentoun I have failed to identify. (7) Browane hill is Brown Hill (871 feet), on northern boundary of Applegarth parish. (8) The Bleise, in Wamphray parish, is still well known by that name: it was called Bleize hill in Crawford's Map, the Ordnance Survey spells it Blaze hill (846 feet). (9) Kyndilknok is Kinnelknock (552 feet), in Johnstone parish. (10) The Gallowhill, at Moffat (832 feet) is a favourite walk of the visitors to that spa.

A glance at the relative position of these places on the map shows how well devised the beacon system of Annandale was—how well the framers of the Lincluden Ordinance were versed in their topography.

The Nithsdale beacon stations are not so easily identifiable as those of Annandale—at least I have failed with nearly half of them.

(11) The Wardlaw (313 feet), is the wood-crowned hill above Carlaverock Castle. (12) "Rahothtoun" was long an unsolved puzzle. One day, however, struck by the nobly extensive view from the hill at Troboughton (312 feet), not far from Dumfries on the road to Carlaverock, I bethought me that Rahothtoun was a very natural misreading of Troboughton in some early spelling. From its commanding position and its mention next in order to Wardlaw, I am quite satisfied that this identification is correct. (13) Barlouch is now the Beacon hill (803 feet) of Barlouth, on the eastern confines of Torthowald parish, and overlooking Lochmaben. (14) Pantua hill I take to be the same height as No. 2 *supra*, viz., Pantath hill, which being as it were the junction point of Nithsdale and Annandale, fell naturally enough into both lists. (15) Malowhill I have not identified. (16) Corswintoun (read Corswincoun) is Corsincon or Corsancone (1,547 feet), in New Cumnock parish, on the border line of Ayrshire and Dumfriesshire. (17) Crwfell is Crufell (1,828 feet), in Sanquhar parish. (18) "The fell abone the Dowlwerk" I am not quite sure of, though I suspect it to have been a hill near Dowlarg in Troqueer parish, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright. Dowlarg (see *Reg. Mag. Sig.*, iii. 989) approximates Dowlwerk in pronunciation. (19) The Watchfell I cannot even guess at.

the Pantath-hill, on the confines of Mouswald and Ruthwell; from Quhitwollin near Lockerbie: I have dimly traced its place from the Bleize Hill of Wamphray: and all these conversely I have seen from Repentance Hill. One summer day I plainly saw Repentance Tower from Holmcoltram in Cumberland, many miles away across the Solway. This width and distance of visibility explains the unique value of Repentance as a beacon station, making its cresset the chief and indispensable amongst the "twinkling points of fire" which, on emergency of old, lit up the night and warned the sturdy spearsmen of Nith and Annan to gather to the fray.

VIII.—REPENTANCE TOWER.



REPENTANCE TOWER FROM THE EAST.

There emerges in record no indication of the existence of a watch tower on Trailtrow¹ before the second half of the 16th century—probably about 1562, and certainly not much earlier. At that time regulations were made, probably by John Maxwell Lord Herries himself, relative to the wardentry of the West March, and for the protection of the Scottish border. In these regulations² an extremely interesting reference is made to the tower.

The keeper of Hoddon Castle was entrusted with sundry duties, one of the injunctions to him being "that he assuredlie take heed that the Watch-

¹ There were no towers at any of the other beacon stations. Observe that the wording "on Trailtrow Hill" says nothing about a turret.

² Nicolson's *Leges Marchiarum*, 1705, p. 135-6.

"house of Trailtrow be kept be the watch thereof. And in the tyme of Warfare the Beaken, as is devised, that is ever in Weir and in Peace, the Watch to be kept in the house heid, and in the weir the beaken in the firepan be kept and never fail burning so long as the Englishmen remain in Scotland, and with ane bell, to be at the head of the firepan, which shall ring whenever the fray is, or that the watchman seeing the thieves disobedient come over the water of Annand or thereabout, and knowes them to be enemies. And whosoever bydes fra the fray or turns again so long as the beaken burns or the bell rings, shall be holden as partakers to the enemy, and used as trators to the Head Burgh of the Shyre upon ane Court day, and thereafter intimation made in the Parish Kirk and published on ane Sunday in presence of the people, and fra thenceforth to be used as as a fugitive and disobedient person."

Stirring one's heart like the sound of a trumpet, that fine old bit of Border law, for the first time, brings Repentance Tower—the Watchhouse of Trailtrow—into the daylight of history. This it does at a time when we know that the site on which it stood was the property of John Maxwell then, or soon to be, Lord Herries; at a time when that nobleman was Warden of the West March, peculiarly interested in and responsible for maintaining efficient the Border system of beacon signals; at a time, too, when he had his chief residence, close beside it, in his recently erected castle of Hoddom.

The tradition that the stones of the chapel of Trailtrow were used in building the castle of Hoddom, may be thought to receive some countenance from the fact of the castle having been originally named Hoddomstanes. That, however, is no corroboration. Had the word been Trailtrowstanes the case might have been different, although it is difficult to conceive that any man would, under such circumstances, have adopted such a name. Moreover, it is so very unusual to christen a place after its building materials, that it is almost impossible to believe that the name had anything whatever to do with the stones which composed the castle. The name, it is to be noted, is primarily not that of the castle, but of the lands;¹ and there is much feasibility in the suggestion that, possibly, over against them was a fordable passage of the Annan river, the stepping stones of which would account for

¹ *Reg. Mag. Sig.*, iv. 2311.

the name. Be that as it may, it is hopeless to appeal to the place-name as any evidence for the tradition of sacrilege. It is, notwithstanding, possible enough that the stones of the ruined chapel of Trailtrow went to the making of Hoddom Castle; it is more likely that they helped to build Repentance Tower, which to this hour is surrounded by the churchyard. There is no direct evidence on the matter. The sole witness whose testimony has survived to our day was Archibald Menzeis, the Preceptor of Trailtrow himself, who, in a charter¹ of 1574, expressly stated that robbers and traitors had taken possession of certain of the lands, and that they had suffered the church of Trailtrow to be utterly destroyed. This may be accepted as absolute authority for the proposition that about the time when Repentance Tower is believed to have been built on, or near, the site of the chapel of Trailtrow, the chapel had been utterly destroyed—a contemporaneity which, if it proves little, suggests a good deal.

In 1570 during an English inroad the tower was injured.² Lord Herries having ceased for the time to be warden of the March, had sold the tower and ground adjacent to his nephew, Lord Maxwell, who had then reached manhood. Even after he had ceased to be its proprietor, it is interesting to observe his solicitude for its repair and maintenance as a part of the system of border defence. There was a bitter contest in 1578 between him and his nephew for the wardenship of the March, an office in the execution of which the latter had not been as successful as his uncle and predecessor. The rivals laid their several schemes for border-rule before the Scots Privy Council in that year. In the proposals of Lord Herries there occurs the following passage³ of great historical value :—

¹ *Reg. Mag. Sig.*, iv. 2311. The narrative of this document is as follows :—"Quia "tenentes terrarum subscriptarum [*i.e.*, the ten husbandlands of Trailtrow, under reservation "to Lord Herries of the 40 shillingland of Hoddomestanis] non solum per predones et patrie "traditores occisi et spoliati fuerant verum etiam eorum uxores et proles vi expulsi et "predones saltem eorum proles et successores tunc fuerunt recuperatores dictarum terrarum "qui ecclesiam de Trailtrow penitus dirui passi sunt et glebam ejusdem invito dicto "Archibaldo occupaverunt."

² The English at the same time "blew up with powder the castle of Hoddom." *Herries' Memoirs*, p. 127.

³ *Reg. Privy Council*, iii. 81; *Book of Carlawerock*, ii. 486.

"The wache toure upoun Trailtrow callit Repentance mon be mendit of
 "the litill diffacing the Englische army maid of it and according to the formar
 "devise the greit bell and the fyir pan put on it ; and ane trew man haiff ane
 "husbandland adjacent for the keping of the continuall wache thair upoun."

To some of the proposals of Lord Herries relative to the tower, Lord Maxwell strongly and sarcastically objected, incidentally hinting that he, as ward, had been taken advantage of in the transaction, by which his guardian had acquired the ground.¹ "Lord Hereis," said he, "being my tutour, had "tane the samen in feu owir my heid the tyme of my minoritie." Having now "coft"² the place back from his uncle, he failed to see why, as a private purchase, it should have to be kept up by him for a public object.



DOOR LINTEL OF REPENTANCE TOWER.

Into the discussion it is needless to enter, beyond noting that what Lord Herries called the "formar devise" of the tower, Lord Maxwell referred to as the "first institutioun," as if to indicate its recent origin. The issue of the discussion was the appointment of Lord Herries to the wardenship. Doubtless his long experience gained him the victory.

¹ *Reg. Privy Council*, iii. 84 ; *Book of Carlaverock*, ii. 488. Last quhair he appointis the toure of Trailtrow to be repairit according to the first institutioun with ane husbandland to be gevin to sum honest man that sall dwell thairin, etc. The mater I grant is litill to effect zit nottheles in respect the same is of my heretage equitie requiris the same to be no farder employed to ane common use than u'hir landis and housse thairto adjacent. Mairowir, I hard na word of this institutioun quhen as I coft the said hous with the landis fra the Lord Hereis eftir that he being my tutour had tane the samen in feu owir my heid the tyme of my minoritie, na thing regarding the kyndlie takis of my foirbearis with my awin, etc.

² Coft = bought.

It is probable that the lands of Wardpark, a short distance from the tower, derive their name from their association with it,¹ and that they formed the "husbandland" held as a perquisite of office by the "trew man," who on the house-head in war and peace kept "watch and ward alway."

With the discussion in 1578 ends the military history of Repentance. Of old the hill, in later times the tower, was Scotland's trusty sentinel. Its cresset, or firepan, kindling in the darkness, was the fiery cross of Dumfriesshire. But the time was at hand when the beacon-fire and the bell were needed no longer to announce with flame and clang that danger was near. The gaunt turret has long ceased to be a combatant, but as an honoured veteran, still hale and hearty, it remains on its appointed spot. It is a storied romantic emblem of far off times and things, from which the pain and sorrow have passed away, leaving only a proud memory behind. May successive lairds of Hoddum, until the millennium, be as tender of its fabric as Mr. Edward Brook has been, and is. As well he might, for, if its story is here interpreted aright, no structure in Scotland is more eloquent of the value of tradition, and few enshrine memories so human and so tragic.

IX.—SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

Remember that there is no appearance in Scottish records of Repentance Tower until after the middle of the 16th century. Remember that John Maxwell, afterwards Lord Herries, was the direct cause of the hanging of fourteen of his blood relations. Remember that self-interest and personal ambition were at the bottom of his perfidious action, and that few men ever had more need to "axe God mercie" than he. Remember that he was Warden of the West March, whose duty it was to maintain the beacon service. Remember that Repentance was a watch-house and beacon turret built for that sole purpose, as its structure shows. Remember that at the time which many circumstances indicate as the date of its erection, he was proprietor of the site on which it stands. Remember his zeal for its repair and maintenance, and the fact that

¹ In the *Retours*, Dumfries, No. 265, a retour in 1669 describes, "40 solidatis terrarum "de Hoddamestanis cum pecia terre vocata *lie* Waird de Hoddamestanis contigue adjacente." Compare also Nos. 163 in 1637 and 325 in 1688 which respectively call it "Warda" and "Waird."

it appears to have been called Repentance from the first.¹ Remember the grim tradition which overshadows its walls—the weird story of unchivalrous slaughter of defenceless prisoners. Then remember how point after point of the varying tradition finds striking illustration in the life-history of this man, the friend and counsellor of Queen Mary, who led her horsemen at Langside, who was her escort and protector in her flight, her advocate when she was the prisoner of Elizabeth—one of the most singular and forceful figures of the 16th century—a Border baron, politician, and courtier,² but of a stormful spirit, born to threaten and command, yet having in his nature a strange strain of religious emotional intensity.³

When all this is remembered, it points to a scarcely resistible conclusion—

¹ See citation of the words of Lord Herries, p. 359 *supra*. In Pont's Map of Annandale, made about 1608, and published in Blaeu's *Atlas*, it appears as the "Tour of Repentance."

² The following mixed testimony to his character occurs in a letter, dated 20th August, 1567, from Sir Nicholas Throgmorton to Sir William Cecil, and printed in preface to Herries' *Memoirs*, p. x:—

"The Lord Herries ys the connyng horsleache and the wysest of the wholle faction, "but as the queene of Scotland sayethe of hym, there ys no bodye can be sure of hym. He "takethe pleasure to beare all the worlde in hande. We have occasyon to be well ware of "hym. Sir, yow remember how he handled us when he delyvered Dunfryse, Carlaverock, "and the Harmitage into our handes: he made us beleave all should be ours to the Fyrthe; "and when wee trusted hym best, how he helped to chase us awaye I am sure you have not "forgotten. Heere amongst hys owne countreyemen he ys nooted to be the most cautellous "man of his natyon. It may lyk yow to remember he suffred hys owne hostages, the "hostages of the Lard of Loughanver and Garles, hys nexte neighboures and frendes, to be "hanged for promesse broken by him. This muche I speake of hym because he ys the "lykelyest and moost dangerous man to inchaunte yow."

³ Let the following note in the *Book of Carlaverock* bear witness:—

"As a memorial of Lord Herries, notice may be taken of an old manuscript volume of "Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland, now in the library of Kirkconnell, which bears on the "first leaf the following inscription shewing that it was originally the property of Lord "Herries.

"Johnne Lord Herreis, with my hand the zeir off God ane thousand fyve hundreth "fourscoir and ane zeir. So be it, amen. *In nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi crucifixi* "furca qui me redemit suo precioso sanguine, ipse me regat benedicat custodiat confirmet in "omni bono opere hodie et quotidie et post hanc miseram vitam perducat me in vitam eternam.

"Look upon me, O my Lord; gef I have done any thyng that is nocht rycht in the eies "of thy mercie for Jesus Chryst thy dere sones." *Book of Carlaverock*, i. 568.

He appears to have changed his religious views several times. Early in life he favoured

based firmly on history, but at the same time satisfying and dignifying tradition—that this man built this tower as a memorial, not, as tradition said, of the English prisoners he drowned, but of the Scottish hostages, his kinsmen, whom he sacrificed. With a burdened conscience he did as Wharton bade him, and “asked God mercy.” His remorse took a practical turn and a patriotic form. It was not an age of church building, and he chose, as his symbol of the wish to expiate his crime, a beacon tower to aid in the defence of that country, in whose service, after all, the great wrong he did had been done.

He sat him on Repentance hicht,
And glowered upon the sea,

and determined that he would do penance in stone by the erection of a beacon turret there.

Such a structure would serve not one but several purposes. Designed to secure as had never been done before, the due and permanent maintenance of an effective watch at a crucial point, and to place the signal system of the West March on a vastly improved basis, it was a border safeguard of large national utility. It was at the same time especially calculated to be of assistance in the first place to himself as Warden, and to his successors in that anxious office. There was therefore shrewdness in the choice. A mind less keenly practical than his might have adopted some other form of memorial. That which he chose was fitted to attain both a public and a private end. His emotion and his patriotism found voice together.

In due course the tower was constructed, bearing on its doorway explicit witness to the inspiring motive of its erection. It was the monument of that proud man's bitterest regret. Carving above the lintel the word, “Repentance,” did he not own his broken faith and confess his tragic error? Did he not, so doing, claim that pardon which religion

the Reformers, and was an intimate acquaintance of John Knox. Later he was one of the chiefs of the Marian and Roman Catholic party. He died a Protestant. The *Book of Carlawerock* (i. 497-570) and M'Dowall's *History of Dumfries* (2nd ed., pp. 236-249) deal with many points in his varied career.

teaches repentance alone can earn? Did he not also thus seek to appease the unquiet spirits of those hostages whose young and innocent blood rose to heaven, accusing not less terribly than if he had strangled with his own hand the victims, who for his dishonoured promise were hanged by Wharton on Haribee? And still the gaunt tower stands, trebly attested by inscription, tradition, and record, as a memento of his great remorse.

Repentance signal of my bale
Built of the lasting stane,
Ye lang shall tell the bluidy tale,
When I am deid and gane.

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